piques," Wilcken might have more carefully addressed the work's published versions. He judges the non-New World overpopulated-tropics chapters "awkwardly inserted" in the Brazilian material, rather than essential fragments that fill out "tropical" variants spatially and historically. Not just these chapters but pages including the controversial "Islam is the West of the East" formulation (paralleling Napoleon) were excluded in the first English translation. To complain that Lévi-Strauss largely omits his New York years (happy ones, oddly) from "Tristes tropiques," misses the force of "tropes of sadness" comprising a work that is assertively not a chronicle.

Wilcken declares that his second half "leaves behind the biographical detail" to deal with ideas. But does it? Chapters bulge with episodes (some gossipy) of academic politics and strategies, professional strife, and ambiguities of fame. He deals circumstantially with Lévi-Strauss's "skills as an institution builder" – his knack for harnessing to marvelously eccentric work, intimations of a "method," a leading academic journal, and even, once upon a time, an "ism." Much of his disciplinary impact stemmed from superb polemical skills, generally waged in counter-attacks.

Wilcken justifies the book's supposed shift to "ideas" biographically, stressing Lévi-Strauss's relative "retreat" into intellectual (versus experiential) life, with expanding professional success and recognition. We proceed from "Structural Anthropology" (1958) on through "Mythologiques" (1964–71 – with 1968 happening in the meantime) and many subsequent books through 1991 (the exquisite "Look Listen Read"). Lévi-Strauss's life already stretched over double exiles and epochal upheavals (World War II and his bare escape from Vichy France; India's partition and his arrival in Karachi in an official UNESCO capacity, etc.). Through intricacies that border on the mysterious, his career (and life) kept on topping itself – eventuating in the Collège de France, Académie française, and canonization in the Pléiade and 100th birthday visit from France's President, declaring him a virtual national treasure. Through all the achievements and élan, Lévi-Strauss continued executing precisely the analyses he earlier promised (save that second kinship volume on complex structures). The undiminished intensity and sheer difficulty, punctuated with poetic-aesthetic delights, was both austere and playful, and always bold. (A fine sample is "The View From Afar.")

Wilcken's second half has to back peddle to "The Elementary Structures of Kinship" and Lévi-Strauss's ethnography of the Nambikwara. He dwells inordinately on Anglo-American (and particularly English) attraction-repulsion to his kinship studies (full disclosure: this reviewer embroiled in those debates, sided with Lévi-Strauss over, say, Needham). Wilcken notes only in passing Lévi-Strauss's deep regard for Boasian work, and second-guesses the avowed impact on him of Lowie. Readers seeking to relate Durkheim's "inconstant disciple," and Mauss's successor to diverse schools of comparative analysis need look elsewhere to fathom "real differences in intellectual culture" between Lévi-Strauss and his British critics (289).

Wilcken makes a game effort to distill both the marriage theory and social structural component and the sensory-concrete logic and mythology component of Lévi-Strauss's interdisciplinary anthropology ("structuralism," so-called). Readers can rummage through copious connections in his *esprit* to linguistics, mathematics, literature and philosophy, music, poetics, visual arts, biology, etc. His political engagement is tracked, along with its relative abatement, or rather "unhitching," to live out analysis of New World myth in monk-like concentration.

Wilcken nicely characterizes relations with key colleagues and rivals – I'll just mention Jakobson, Merleau-Ponty, Caillois, and Lacan from a cast of 100s. That Derrida is marginalized will not please advocates of this long-time de-constructer of Lévi-Strauss. Of many giants of history germane to the work, Wilcken rightly stresses, say, Goethe, as well as Montaigne, Rousseau, and Marx. To grasp the force of, say, Wagner, for Lévi-Strauss would require less sketchy sampling of the myth and kinship studies and more through engagement with the entire corpus. Too seldom does Wilcken recognize the "mischievous side to Lévi-Strauss," (233) which is actually pervasive, including his engaging ambivalence about psychoanalysis.

Enthusiastically attentive to a scholar of yore, Wilcken's study does not quite envision that Lévi-Strauss's lifework may be less "past" than still-to-be-read, otherwise. The best biography sends us back to the source. Engaging Lévi-Strauss on the page today remains rather daunting, yet doing so may help resuscitate analytic and interpretive thinking both like his own, and different. We anthropologists (unlike Pléiade editors) should keep his kinship opus and his "Mythologiques" opera where they belong: as the twin representative centerpieces of Lévi-Strauss's ethnological world, graced throughout with *pensée sauvage.*

James A. Boon

Zeller, Joachim: Weiße Blicke – Schwarze Körper. Afrikaner im Spiegel westlicher Alltagskultur. Bilder aus der Sammlung Peter Weiss. Erfurt: Sutton Verlag, 2010. 250 pp., Fotos. ISBN 978-3-86680-412-8. Preis: € 34.90

It is by no means accidental that a combination of black and white colors dominates the cover design of Joachim Zeller's latest book "Weiße Blicke – Schwarze Körper. Afrikaner im Spiegel westlicher Alltagskultur" (White Gazes – Black Corpses. Africans in the Mirror of Western Daily Culture). The black-and-white photo presented on the cover succinctly introduces the content of the book and the issues of symbolism it explores. The photo was taken by the Polish photographer Casimir Zagourski (Kazimierz Zagórski) in the 1920s, during his extensive travels through Belgian Congo. It depicts an African woman wearing only beads and bracelets; she also has elaborately plaited hair. Her eyes, however, are hidden behind her arm which she stretches across her face. This gesture hides her face (or at least her eyes) from the gaze of the camera (and the man behind the camera). Commenting this picture (235), Zeller highlights the double symbolism of the woman's gesture. On the one hand,

she is hiding herself from the intrusive gaze of the photographer, which at the same time also shows her defiance. On the other hand, however, this gesture emphasizes a division between the power of the "white gaze" and the powerlessness of the "black body" which becomes even more powerless and objectified when deprived of its own eyes and its own gaze. This black-and-white picture gains more figurative shades and colors inside the book that reveal many layers of meaning hidden in the asymmetrical power relationship between white watchers (gazing, painting, and photographing) and the black objects of their gaze (being watched, gazed at, painted, and photographed).

Zeller organized his book around a variety of such visuals that document "Western" colonial and postcolonial discourses about Africa. Special emphasis is put on German iconography. The majority of the pictures are from the fantastic private postcard collection of Peter Weiss (Sammlung Peter Weiss; www.postcard-museum.com). Zeller also uses his own iconographic material as well as the pictures owned by various institutions and private collectors. These are mostly postcards as well as photographs, leaflets, printed advertisements, and posters. The illustrations date back mostly to the first half of the twentieth century (but there are also quite a few pictures from earlier and later periods). The author does not discuss the material in a chronological order; instead he is interested in tracing common views, stereotypes, and popular concepts about Africa. These ideas were created and shared by Europeans in colonial times, but they are also – sometimes surprisingly – still present today in popular culture and in imagery.

Zeller orders the visuals into eighteen thematic chapters that are designed for both picture-viewing and text-reading. Each chapter consists of a short written introduction followed by carefully chosen illustrations with detailed captions. The captions not only provide a reader with the information about the origins of illustrations, but also contain short historical commentaries in which Zeller proposes his interpretations and his *readings* of the pictures. The book is thus consciously composed as a photo-essay. And for a reader who is going through the pages, the processes of viewing and reading seem to be a coherent whole – with the text and the image intertwined. The visuals might not be as explicit as written words, but they can definitely communicate and inform, and thus create opinions and shape our perception of reality. In the process of viewing and *reading* them, one is caught up in a complicated dynamic that includes those who were taking the pictures, those who were presented in them, and those who were original recipients (for whom the pictures had been designed).

The eighteen chapters of Zeller's book also describe (and illustrate) various ambivalent – and sometimes contradictory – popular concepts about Africa and Africans. The African "others" were perceived as nonhuman, animal-like creatures that were frequently displayed in European capitals as integral parts of various colonial exhibitions. Some of them also appeared at curiosity shows, next to "dwarfs" and other examples of "deformed" bodies. In another popular discourse, the black – often naked – bodies were seen by "civilized whites" as the image of the lost paradise in which our "living ancestors" lived in harmony with "natural environment." This fear and fascination also went along with the "scientific" approach toward Africa(ns). Introducing a visual typography of various African tribes and physiognomies was one of the means of "taming" the "dark continent" and its people. Zeller remarks that in the context of colonial economy, Africans were often depicted and perceived as anonymous masses, primitive natives, barbarians, and cannibals who were "naturally" predestined for slavery. Additionally, visuals show infantile images of Africans still present and still popular in various games and imagery destined to be used by children. Zeller concludes that humor and jokes about Africans (represented in visual materials, e.g., comical stories and caricatures) should not be seen as neutral but rather weighted with colonial, paternalistic, or even racist ideology.

A truly shocking chapter consists the unambiguously racist "black disgrace on the Rhine" (or "black shame on the Rhine," German: "Schwarze Schmach am Rhein") campaign. This infamous campaign appeared as a reaction against the stationing of French African troops in the Rhineland after World War I. Racist opinions and various allegations against the black soldiers were reinforced by the image of a "black uncivilized beast." In this section, Zeller also displays propaganda images (produced during World War I), which depicted cruelty and barbarism of black soldiers fighting for the French. These pictures are followed by the anti-black and racist imagery produced in the Third Reich. Zeller observes that – once created – racist images used in war propaganda can be easily reused in different historical circumstances. The power of stereotypical images is based on their durability.

Other topics that Zeller addresses include such issues like love and intimate relations between Europeans and Africans in colonial and postcolonial periods. He also recalls a distinct fascination with the exotic African art and black artists in the form of the "black glamour" that was in fashion in Germany of the 1920s. At the same time, there occurred also certain popularization of images of black bodies as sexual objects and symbols of sexual potency. The author finishes his book with stories (written and visualized) of an Afro-German population (from its beginnings through the present day), and presents examples of some antiracist imagery.

Zeller's book reveals the power of images and the power of the gaze. Looking is hardly a neutral act and images of Africans and their bodies created by "Westerners" document not so much the depicted objects, but rather what was present in the minds of the "white observers." In this way, Zeller discloses and systematizes a variety of meanings hidden in black-white relations. The book clearly demonstrates how this kind of iconographic material can be *viewed* and interpreted as if they were reflected in a multilayered mirror because they capture mutual relations between depicted "objects" and those who look at them.

Anna Niedźwiedź